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ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Programme budget implications of draft decision E/1991/L.10

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 31 of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council

1. Under the terms of draft decision E/1991/L.10, the Economic and Social Council would decide to request the Commission on Narcotic Drugs to establish, in accordance with the proposal of the Chairman and the Bureau of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, an Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole at its thirty-fourth regular session, following the relevant procedures of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council.

2. Based on the assumption that the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs would be composed of members of the Commission, would hold two meetings a day for four to five days, simultaneously with the thirty-fourth regular session of the Commission, and that interpretation would be provided in the six official languages of the Council, the related conference-servicing requirements on a full-cost basis are estimated at $87,000 for the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole.

3. In the programme budget for the biennium 1988-1989, recurrent resources were provided for a number of activities of a perennial nature for which non-recurrent provision had been made in previous budgets. In that context, provision was made in 1988-1989 and in 1990-1991 not only for recurrent meetings, but also for meetings that would be authorized subsequently on the assumption that General

* E/1991/2.

Assembly resolution 40/243 of 18 December 1985 would be complied with fully and that no more than five special conferences would be held in any given year. The level of financial provision in each case was based on the average experience of previous years.

4. Following a reduction in the number of meetings after 1985 as a result of the financial crisis, at the time of the preparation of the programme budget for 1990-1991 it appeared that the number of meetings was stabilizing. In addition, implementation of the recommendations of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations, as endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986, and especially recommendations 1, 2, 3 and 8, could reasonably have been expected to restrain or reduce the number of meetings in 1990-1991. However, experience in 1990 indicated a clear increase in the number of non-recurrent meetings and work-loads and financial requirements.

5. In that connection, in the first performance report of the Secretary-General on the programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991 (A/C.5/45/45 and Add.1), the Secretary-General projected a "net over-expenditure" under temporary assistance for meetings and related items. In addition, the Secretary-General stated that, in view of the current trends in work-load for 1991, it would appear that the provision for temporary assistance for meetings and related objects of expenditure in the biennium 1990-1991 as a whole would prove seriously inadequate. On that basis, the Secretary-General requested, inter alia, an increase of $2 million in the global provision for temporary assistance for meetings under section 29. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions recommended that no decision be taken at that stage and indicated that it would decide, at its spring session of 1991, in the context of a further report of the Secretary-General, whether commitment authority for $2 million would be required. The General Assembly concurred in that approach.

6. Therefore, the requirements for the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs would be taken into account in the context of the report of the Secretary-General to the Advisory Committee.